

## AFTER RUMANIA—WHAT WILL BULGARIA DO?

The Allies' Balkan Campaign Designed to Isolate the Turk and Open the Straits from the Land Side—Thus Russia May Be Munitioned and Send Out Her Wheat.

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Unless all signs fail, the next few months are to see the centre of the world war shifted abruptly to the Balkans. Just a year ago Germany, victorious in all but the final moment of her Russian campaign, and having driven the Slavs back from the Carpathians and the Vistula to the Dvina and the Styr, was preparing for her great "push" to Constantinople. To-day the Allied effort is clearly concentrated upon an attempt to undo the work of Mackensen a year ago.

It is essential to perceive that this campaign, even if the Allies derive the maximum of profit from it, will not win the war or exercise a decisive military influence upon the other fields, although its moral influence and its political consequences may be considerable. Take as a fair parallel Grant's campaign for Vicksburg, which aimed at separating the Confederacy into two parts by taking and holding the Mississippi line. The Allies are operating for the possession of the Vienna-Constantinople railroad in the same fashion.

#### To Isolate the Turk.

Grant's victory cut off the Southern States west of the river from the bulk of the Confederacy. A successful Allied campaign will separate Turkey from the Central States and, incidentally, crush Bulgaria. Vicksburg did not end the Civil War; it played only a comparatively minor part in subsequent events, but it was an essential step. In opening the great river to the North and closing it to the South, it rendered very great service. But if this may be compared to the consequences of opening the Straits to Russian and Allied fleets, it will be seen that the Balkan campaign is actually more important than that along the Mississippi.

We see with absolute clarity that the first objective of the Allies is to cut the Vienna-Constantinople railroad and isolate the Turk. We perceive with similar clarity that this is but the first step in opening the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus. When this is done all the problems of Russian munitioning will disappear and both Russia and Rumania will immediately profit by obtaining the Allied markets for their wheat, oil and other products. Not until this is accomplished will Russia be actually delivered from the situation into which the Turk's entrance into the war placed her.

#### Must Open the Straits.

Now, the Allies have tried and failed, both by fleet and army, to force the Dardanelles. Their failure was not absolute until the Germans, forcing their way through Serbia, reached Stamboul and were thus able to open a route for German munitions between Essen and the Sea of Marmora. Until that moment mere lack of ammunition had several times placed the Turk in deadly peril. But if the road is closed again the peril in some measure will be renewed. And when this happens the new attack will not be aimed primarily at Gallipoli, but at Chatalja, at the base of the peninsula on which Constantinople stands, along the front where the Bulgarians were checked in 1913, through the lack of heavy artillery, and because of the support the Turks derived from their warships.

In a word, the purpose of the Allies is to cut the Vienna-Constantinople railroad first, thus isolating Turkey, then to attack Constantinople and Gallipoli from the land, not the water, side, and, given their superiority of artillery and munitions, to force the eventual capitulation of the Ottoman forts that command the two gates to the Sea of Marmora, the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus. Besides these two purposes the third, the liberation of Serbia, is relatively minor, although it will result naturally from the realization of the first two. And even the conquest of Bulgaria and the cutting of the

railroad are subordinate to the main purpose, which is opening the Straits.

Until Rumania entered the war the Allied situation was unpromising, because the Allies were able to operate on only one front, that in Macedonia above Salonica. Here their superiority in numbers and guns was neutralized by the narrowness of the front and the extreme difficulty of the country, due to its mountainous character, which gave the Bulgarians a great advantage and enabled them, reinforced by a few Austrian and German brigades, to hold back great numbers with little real difficulty. At all times there had been grave doubt in the minds of military observers as to whether the Salonica army could force the Valley of the Vardar and get back into the Valley of the Morava in Serbia.

But once Rumania came in the Allies obtained a new and wide front on which to attack Bulgaria and Russian armies to make the attack. Aside from many hundred miles of Bulgarian territory facing Rumania across the Danube, there is the even more advantageous opening between the Danube and the sea south of the Rumanian city of Constanta and in the portion of the Dobrudja which Rumania took from Bulgaria in the Second Balkan War. Through this gap at the moment I am writing this the reports from London announce that a great Russian army is advancing. In the northern corner of this gap the Germans and Bulgarians made a preliminary foray, taking Tutracan a week ago, and in the centre they took and, it appears, subsequently lost the city of Dobrich, once Bulgarian, and the head of a railroad going south to Varna, on the Black Sea.

#### Between Two Millstones.

The Bulgarians are now between two millstones, between the French, British, Italians, Russian and Serb troops operating from Salonica and the Russian and Rumanian troops operating in the Dobrudja and along the Danube. Hitherto the whole Bulgarian army has been able to cover Salonica; henceforth it must be divided, unless Germany, Austria and Turkey can furnish troops to defend Northern Bulgaria. In a word, the new situation in the Balkans has made a demand for a new Austro-German army of very considerable size at the precise moment when the invasion of Transylvania has produced a similar demand, this time from Budapest and not from Sofia. These demands coincide with other demands; they coincide with the need for fresh troops to defend Lemberg against the steadily advancing Russian armies and the claim on German reserves to replace the heavy losses that are being occasioned by the Anglo-French attack on the Somme. Finally, the Italian operations about Gorizia are calling for greater and greater attention from Austria.

#### Worrying Germany.

Now, it is interesting to note that this situation is emphasized in recent rumors that come from Berlin. Falkenhayn, says one report, recognized the Balkan situation, believed that the converging attack upon Bulgaria would succeed and advised the German Emperor to abandon the Balkan campaign and shorten his lines east and west to meet the growing dangers incident to such a wide extension of front. For this, we are asked to believe, that Falkenhayn was removed. This last is pretty far fetched; the failure of Verdun is enough to warrant the removal of the Chief of Staff who was responsible for it. But there is interesting material in the rumor itself. It serves to indicate how the Bulgarian problem weighs upon the German mind.

With two thrusts directed at the vital railroad, what numbers have the Bulgarians and their allies available to meet them? The Bulgarians themselves cannot have above 300,000, and this is a high

#### THE ALLIED MILLSTONES.



Heavy black lines show lines of the two Allied armies—the Russo-Rumanian in the north and the Salonica army in the south. Since the map was drawn the Germans have taken Silistria and Tutracan.

figure, regard being had for their enormous losses in the two previous Balkan Wars and their considerable losses in the contests of the present war. But the combined Allied army, extending from the Adriatic to the Aegean, from Valona to Salonica, is hardly less than 750,000 strong. Obviously the Bulgarian army would not be able to do more than attend to this department of the total task of the Central Powers in the Balkans.

#### The Question of Numbers.

Actually there are a number of German and Austrian regiments in the Macedonian line, and it is fair to estimate that they number 100,000, thus leaving 100,000 Bulgarians for service in the north. Until recently this northern army was supported by many Turkish divisions, quartered along the Black Sea and held against the chance that Russia would attempt to invade Bulgaria from the sea. But most of these have been drawn off to help the Austrians, and we hear reports of their presence about Halicz and north along the Zlota Lipa.

As the Russians and Rumanians will probably be able to put from 300,000 to 500,000 troops on the Dobrudja front, it is clear that there must be a very large contribution made by the Germans and the Austrians. At the very least four or five corps must be sent to support the troops of Czar Ferdinand, unless there is another Turkish army available. But we know that the Turks have been using very considerable numbers in the severe fighting both in Armenia and in Mesopotamia, and we know that their losses have been great, their defeats heavy and that Russian advance in this quarter still holds the Turks to their work.

On the other hand, there is no question as to what the Germans must do. Bulgaria is vital to the whole German idea. If Bulgaria is conquered the road to the Near East is cut. If Bulgaria is threatened with defeat and conquest there is not

the smallest question as to what she will do, for there is a very strong Russophile party in the country, and having experienced one war, recently, in which Bulgaria had to bear the attacks of four nations single handed, there will be no disposition on the part of the people to wait for the last ditch or the forlorn hope.

If the Russians and Rumanians make any real progress in Bulgarian territory in the next few weeks, if Germany and Austria and Turkey are not able to prove that they can defend Bulgaria at the frontier, then it will be time to watch for a change in Bulgarian alignment. Moreover, the moment the Russo-Rumanian pressure in the Bulgarian lands north of the main Balkan chain begins to be heavy the Bulgarians are bound to insist upon the withdrawal of Bulgarian troops from Macedonia, just as the Hungarians are clamoring for the withdrawal of the Honveds from Russia and the Balkans at the present moment when the Rumanians are invading Transylvania. Such a withdrawal would enable Sarrail to move up from Salonica with his great army toward Nish, along the Belgrade-Salonica railroad, and if he were able to get to Nish the Vienna-Constantinople railroad would be cut and both Bulgaria and Turkey isolated from Germany and Austria, because the line of the Danube has already passed under Rumanian guns.

#### Constantinople Imperilled.

Nor is the demand of the Turks for the defence of the life line binding them to their allies likely to be less insistent than that of the Bulgarians. If the Germans are ever again shut out of the Balkans the fate of the Ottoman is sealed, so far as Constantinople is concerned, and he realizes this perfectly. He can hardly hope to make much of a bargain with his enemies now, but he is sure to begin to make the best bargain he can the moment that all hope on the other side begins to vanish.

And there is a strong Turkish element in Constantinople hostile to Enver and his German alliance.

We have, then, in the Balkan crisis an excellent barometer of the larger situation. We have had a summer of Allied offensive operations, a summer in which there has not been one considerable German effort to seize the initiative. In this time there have been ever recurring demands for German reinforcements following close upon the terrible depletion of German reserves before Verdun and the considerable loss of Austrian reserves in the Trentino offensive that had to be abandoned. Galicia and Volhynia have been graveyards of Austrian masses, and not less than 400,000 Austrian prisoners have been taken on this front and the Italian.

#### Demands on Berlin.

To-day Berlin is listening to demands for reinforcements from Vienna (these are asked to save Lemberg); similar demands are addressed to Berlin from Budapest to save Transylvania. Other like demands come from Sofia and from Constantinople. Alongside these appeals lie the reports from the West front setting forth the casualty lists due to the Anglo-French offensives along the Somme. Conceivably Germany has still the reserves to answer all these demands, but there is no sign of it that she has disclosed in recent events. Not even with Turk divisions has she been able to check Brussiloff's drive toward Lemberg. The Rumanian armies continue to flow through Transylvania practically unopposed. German counter attacks in Picardy have, as Joffre recently told a friend of mine, "lost their bite."

Here is a situation that answers quite accurately to the diagnosis ascribed to Falkenhayn. Here is a situation which would seem to require immediate shortening of the lines. But where? And to shorten the lines in France will have instant political effect in Sofia and Constantinople. Napoleon had just the same

Berlin Is Overwhelmed with Appeals for Aid—If the Kaiser Cannot Comply the Decline of German Prospects Must Drive Bulgaria to Go While She Can Make Terms.

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problem in 1813, and he could not persuade himself to shorten his lines in Germany, although he had, perforce, to shorten his lines in the Spanish Peninsula and his troops were ultimately driven out of Spain altogether. Even more significant to the Bulgarian would be the surrender of the present Eastern front, a retreat to the Niemen and the Bug or the Vistula.

The considerations that influenced Rumania to enter the conflict—that is, the facts as the Rumanian statesmen saw them as to the Austro-German outlook—will receive the closest scrutiny in Bulgaria, and the continued decline of German prospects will infallibly lead to the desertion of Bulgaria while she can still make terms; and there is no mistaking the fact that terms are available. Adrianople and Thrace, perhaps Greek Kavala and Drama, to which Constantine has permitted Bulgarian armies to advance, the east bank of the Vardar from Veles to Guevgeli—these are inducements that the Bulgarians could have for changing their allegiance.

#### Politics a Factor.

It must be remembered, then, that the political and the military circumstances march hand in hand in the Balkans. Not even Constantine can keep his people neutral when it becomes a little clearer, if it does, that Allied success is assured. Greek entrance would add 250,000 men to Allied armies. It would be a new burden for the German to bear, for only Germany could find new troops. It would be an added incentive to the Bulgarians to abandon a losing cause. The Bulgarians are not in the war because of any fondness of the Bulgarians for the Teuton. He enlisted because he expected a German victory, and a quick victory. He decided Germany could give him Macedonia after one campaign. He has got Macedonia, but there is no sign of an end of the campaign and some doubt as to the permanency of his stay.

In the next few days and weeks two things are to be watched—the Sarrail army at Salonica, the Russo-Rumanian army in the Dobrudja. The advance of the latter will draw off troops from the front of the former and Sarrail's army is sure to move. It may move up the Vardar Valley toward Skopje and Nish; it may move east along the shore of the Aegean toward Salonica and Constantinople. If the Greeks enlist, their army will surely be sent this way to conquer the seaboard regions which they hoped to keep in 1913, the regions between the Mesta and the Maritza, which are peopled by Greeks mainly, or were before the Balkan Wars.

Meantime the Russo-Rumanian army, if it is able to progress at all, will either move south along the shore of the Black Sea, taking Varna and Burgas and turning the Balkan Mountains, or it will move west along the Danube, aiming at Sofia. In either case its communications will be assured by sea or by the Danube. We may guess that this army will not get very far before there will be political disturbances in Bulgaria and possibly a very complete change in Bulgarian alignment. But we must assume also that in the very nature of the case Germany will make every effort to check the advance, for political rather than military reasons. If she can bring enough troops to this front and win a sufficiently complete success she will take the pressure off the Hungarians and compel the Rumanians to recall their troops from Transylvania to defend Bucharest and the Dobrudja. The first German operations about Tutracan and Silistria forecast just such a strategy.

#### Again in the Limelight.

Once more, as a year ago at this time, Bulgaria holds the centre of the stage. It is safe to assume that she will not desert her allies as long as she feels that they have an even chance of victory, because she will have to give up most of her Serbian conquests. If Rumania were defeated she might count on taking all the Rumanian seacoast, and she owes Rumania a lesson for the incidents of 1913. Finally, the Bulgarians dream of hegemony in the Balkans, realizable in a measure if the Central Powers retain their hold in the peninsula, will disappear if the Allies win and Bulgaria will be smaller than Rumania or Serbia. She may even be smaller than Greece, if Greece gets on the winning side in time.

But if Bulgaria deserts or is conquered, then the collapse of the Austro-German influence in the Balkans and in the Near East will be instant and the fall of Constantinople will not long be delayed. Incidentally the liberation of Serbia will be prompt and the gap in the circle of fire and steel about the Central Powers opened by Mackensen a year ago will be closed. The war has seen few more dramatic moments than the present and few more interesting campaigns than that which is now opening in the Balkans.

#### KING CONSTANTINE AND M. VENIZELOS.

